wherein players submit wagers and select card options according to rules that simulate a casino blackjack game, and wherein said [personal] computer assembly is configured, in conjunction with said video display assembly, to display the dealer hand and player hands on a said monitor.

13. (Amended) The device as in claim 9, including a ticket dispenser housed by said cabinet and proximate said [independent] player stations and a printing mechanism also housed by said cabinet and configured to print video [card] game results on tickets for distribution via said ticket dispenser.

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the interview granted by the Examiner on June 6, 1996. The following remarks address issues as requested by the Examiner at the interview.

Presently, claims 1-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as set forth on pages 1 and 2 of the Office Action. Applicant has amended the claims to overcome these rejections.

All the claims stand rejected, either under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or § 103, in view of Fongeallaz et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,186,460. Fongeallaz discloses, at Figure 11 and column 3, lines 6-30, a multiplayer video game wherein a plurality of joysticks communicate with a main computer via a hardware device 15. As illustrated in the figure, each joystick communicates with the hardware device 15 by a single communication line. Hardware device 15 polls each joystick, determines its position, and transmits the resulting information serially to the computer.

Fongeallaz teaches, "[a]s a further alternative, for just 1 or 2 or 3 players," the use of keyboard 12.

Fongeallaz does not disclose or teach the invention as claimed in amended claim 1. For example, Fongeallaz does not disclose spacially separate player stations wherein each player station includes at least one data input switch outputting a binary player input signal which changes state upon activation of the data input switch by a player, or an interface assembly configured to receive the player input signals directly from the data input switches. Additionally, Fongeallaz fails to disclose or teach the combination of elements in claim 1.

For example, the only spacially separate player stations of Fongeallaz are the joysticks J2-J4. However, there is no direct communication between each possible joystick position and device 15. Thus, as explained at column 3, lines 11-14, the device 15, alone or in conjunction with the joystick, must have some means for determining the state of the joystick.

In contrast, the device as claimed in claim 1 requires that each of the multiple and separate player stations include at least one data input switch that outputs a binary player input signal directly to an interface assembly. Although the switch may be constructed in various forms, for example a contact switch, the output is binary. That is, the output of the switch is recognized to be in one condition when the switch is in one position and to be in one other condition when the switch is in another position. Thus, for example, a switch may provide zero

volts in one position and five volts in another or change gradually and be recognized to change state at a predetermined point.

However the switch is configured, the interface device recognizes an input from each switch directly and recognizes that the input may be in one of two conditions. Thus, the interface receives information directly from the data input switch rather than through the player station as a unit, and there is therefore no need for the interface to determine the state of the player stations in order to communicate appropriate information to the computer. Thus, the interface device as claimed in claim 1 provides a more direct communication between the data input and the computer than the device 15 of Fongeallaz.

Fongeallaz does teach a direct communication between data input and the computer through the use of keyboard 12. The use of the keyboard for a multiple player stations is, however, undesirable in a video gaming machine. Fongeallaz provides spacially separate player stations through the use of an interface such as the Fongeallaz device 15. Thus, Fongeallaz teaches away from the invention as claimed in claim 1.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that claim 1 is allowable over Fongeallaz. Claims 2-9 and 13 are dependent, directly or indirectly, upon claim 1. Independent claims 10 and 12 require spacially separate player stations having data input switches outputting binary player input signals and an interface assembly in communication with a plurality of communication lines

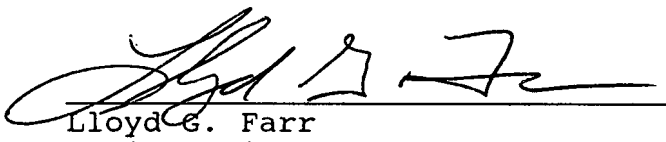
corresponding to individual data input switches and are allowable over Fongeallaz. Dependent claim 11 is dependent upon claim 10.

Applicant submits that, with the present amendment, the application, including active claims 1-13, is now in condition for allowance. Favorable action is, therefore, respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at his convenience to resolve any remaining issues.

Please charge any additional fees required by this amendment to Deposit Account No. 04-1403.

Respectfully submitted,

DORITY & MANNING, P.A.



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